



A guide to Safe Recruitment



Advertising

Communicates the organisation's commitment to following safe recruitment processes, including police screening.



Position Description

Incorporate safeguarding responsibilities applicable to the role and highlight these as being a shared organisational responsibility.



Job Application Form

Applicants are to provide a copy of their curriculum vitae (CV) and complete a job application form. All information in the application form should align with that in the CV. Any misalignments, significant gaps in practice etc should be investigated further.

As a minimum, a job application form should request:

- Personal details such as full name, address, contact phone number etc.
- Relevant work experience, qualifications and training.
- Name and contact information of at least two referees. Referees can not be family members.
- Consent from applicant to abide by the organisation's safe recruitment process, including police vetting and if applicable, any safety checks as required by the Children's Act 2014. Any offer of employment is subject to satisfactory completion of this process and necessary checks.
- Applicant to disclose any information deemed relevant to the role such as:
 - Any court diversion orders, criminal convictions (not including any concealed under the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004; unless exempt via the Children Act 2014 Police Screen) etc.
 - Awareness of any pending investigations that may result in charges; currently under investigation that may result in charges; or awaiting the hearing of charges in a Civil or Criminal Court of Law.
 - Any form of investigation from OrangaTamariki or similar agencies.
 - Any form of investigation or disciplinary action relating to child safety.
 - Holders of a work permit or visa with a 12-month expiry or less must provide a police certificate from their country of origin.
- Include a statement detailing any unsatisfactory check or failure to disclose relevant information may result in termination of application or employment.

Identity Verification



Request documents to confirm an applicant's identity such as a passport, birth certificate etc.



Qualification, Registration Check

For positions requiring specific qualifications or registrations, evidence of these should be provided by the applicant and verification sought from the issuing organisation or employer.



References

A minimum of two referees is required with at least one from the most recent place of employment. When conversing with referees ensure to mention that the position applied for involves working with children and young people. Ask about the applicants suitability for the role. Where limited experience of working with tamariki is noted, follow up with referees from any former positions which have involved working with children.



Police Vetting

Police vetting is undertaken if deemed applicable to the position or is a mandatory requirement as defined by the Children's Act 2014. A satisfactory police check must be completed and approved as per the organisation's safe recruitment process prior to nominating a successful applicant.

Police vetting is carried out every three years and performed earlier when:

- A position change results in increasing child and young person contact or responsibilities.
- A concern is raised against an individual which instigates a need for reassessing their suitability for the role.



Interview

Ideally, an interview panel should consist of at least one member trained in safeguarding and child protection. Interview questions should include topics relating to safeguarding and child protection to assist in determining a candidate's values and beliefs towards practice and behaviours, as well as their safeguarding knowledge and experience.



Employment File

Keep the following supporting documentation on file for the successful applicant:

- Identity Verification - copies of passport, birth certificate etc
- Qualifications, Registrations - evidence and verification details
- References - relevant notes from conversations had with referees
- Police Vetting - documents and assessment notes
- Interview - notes from interview





Sample Recruitment Questions

Referee Questions



A minimum of two referees is required with at least one from the most recent place of employment. For a young person coming from education, the referee should be a teacher or person from a similar role. Sample questions:

- This role involves working with children and young people, do you have any concerns about XXXX working in such a role?
- Would you allow XXXX to care for your children?
- Have you ever felt uncomfortable about XXXX's behaviour towards children? What were your concerns, what did you do and how was the issue resolved?
- Did you ever have concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children in XXXX's care?
- Would you employ XXXX again?



Interview Questions



Gain an insight into an applicant's attitude and behaviour towards children and young people by asking:

- What do you feel are the main reasons that have led you to want to work with children?
- Tell us about a time when you took action to help protect a child.
- How in your work or life so far have you tried to ensure that children are protected?
- What has your work with children and young people taught you about yourself?
- What are your thoughts on child protection and how have these developed over time?
- What are your feelings about children who make allegations against staff?
- Have you ever had concerns about a colleague with regards to their behaviour or attitude towards children in their care? What action did you take?
- If a child was displaying challenging behaviour, how would you manage this?

Potential Warning Signs



During the recruitment process, you may become aware of things that cause you concern. Do not ignore these, investigate further. Concerns may include:

- Little or no understanding and appreciation of children's needs or expectations.
- Appears to want the role to meet their own needs rather than those of children.
- Uses inappropriate language when talking about children.
- Vague about experiences or gaps in application form.
- Unable to provide examples to support their answers.
- A nonconformist - unwilling to follow rules, procedures or work with others.





Concern regarding staff or volunteers

Guidance for sharing information or providing a reference when you have concerns about a person's behaviour towards children.

If an HR process is followed to address a concern with an employee or volunteer regarding their behaviour towards anyone under 18, this must be recorded on their HR file.

If their contract is terminated or they resign as part of this process, it is highly recommended NOT signing a non-disclosure agreement regarding the reasons for their employment termination or voluntary leaving. This ensures no privacy laws are breached if you pass on concerns regarding their behaviour towards children to any potential employer of this person. If a non-disclosure agreement is signed, this information can not be passed on.

If you are ever asked to provide a reference and no process such as the above was followed, legislation enables you to provide information if you have concerns about the person's suitability to work with children. You do not have to refuse to provide a reference.

If someone puts you down as a reference, they are consenting for you to share information about them if you're contacted for this purpose. You **can** provide information regarding any concerning behaviour **only if** a reference has been asked for. **Always** seek a reference for those wanting a position working with children.

Organisations looking to employ someone or engage a volunteer should seek references from their previous work places. To contact a referee, written consent is required from the prospective staff or volunteer. If consent is not granted, it is a potential red flag for child safety. It would be advisable to discontinue with this person's application on this basis.

